



## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

**09/25/2006**

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### **NATIONAL SCIENCE BOARD RECOMMENDS MAJOR NEW NATIONAL INITIATIVE IN HURRICANE SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING**

*Board to unveil a draft report for public comment at a Capitol Hill briefing*

The National Science Board will release a draft report for public comment on Sept. 29 at a Capitol Hill news briefing with lawmakers that will propose a major new national hurricane research initiative, and recommend new funding to jump start this effort. The report, *Hurricane Warning: The Critical Need for a National Hurricane Research Initiative*, will be unveiled in U.S. Capitol Room SC-6 on Sept. 29 from 10:30-11:30 a.m. Media are invited to attend the briefing.

The devastation resulting from hurricanes cost the lives of many U.S. citizens. In addition, estimated losses to private homes and businesses, as well as environmental and property damage reached a stifling \$179 billion from 2001-2005 (constant dollars, 2006). The losses alone from four hurricanes and tropical storms that hit Florida and the East in 2004, and from Hurricane Katrina and other storms in 2005, were estimated at \$168 billion (constant dollars). In the final tally, the figure could be higher, still.

Since December 2005, a Science Board task force has been studying the issue of nationwide investments in hurricane science and engineering. Its report warns that relative to the tremendous damage and suffering caused by hurricanes, the federal investment in hurricane science and engineering is insufficient, and as the Board document exclaims, "time is not on our side."

The Board will call for a wide interdisciplinary and organizational approach to address priorities needed for the nation to become "more resilient" to hurricane impacts. The Board recommends that this interagency effort be led by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The public will have a 30-day period to comment on the report following its unveiling on Capitol Hill.

U.S. Senator Mel Martinez (R-Fla.) and others are expected to make statements at the Sept. 29 briefing. Martinez is expected to announce legislation he is sponsoring to begin a new initiative in hurricane research, based on many of the conclusions in the Science Board's draft report.

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The National Science Board is a 24-member independent advisory body to the President and Congress on matters of national science and engineering policy. The Board also serves as the oversight and policy setting body of the National Science Foundation. (See: <http://www.nsf.gov/nsb/overview/about.htm> )

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**WHO:** Steven C. Beering, M.D., President Emeritus, Purdue University, and Chairman, National Science Board  
( <http://www.nsf.gov/nsb/members/beering.htm> )

Kenneth M. Ford, Ph.D., Director, Institute for Human and Machine Cognition, Pensacola, Florida, and co-chair of the National Science Board's Task Force on Hurricane Science and Engineering  
( <http://www.nsf.gov/nsb/members/ford.htm> )

Kelvin K. Droegemeier, Ph.D., Associate Vice President for Research, Regents' Professor of Meteorology and Weathernews Chair, University of Oklahoma, Norman, and co-chair of the National Science Board's Task Force on Hurricane Science and Engineering  
( <http://www.nsf.gov/nsb/members/droegemeier.htm> )

**WHAT:** National Science Board briefing on findings of its draft report for public comment, *Hurricane Warning: The Critical Need for a National Hurricane Research Initiative*

**WHEN:** Friday, Sept. 29, 2006, from 10:30-11:30 a.m.

**WHERE:** Room SC-6, U.S. Capitol

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**Note to reporters/editors:** Reporters who do not have U.S. Capitol press credentials must enter through the North Door of the Capitol on the Constitution Avenue side, process through security, and report to the Appointments Desk for a temporary access pass and directions to the event room.

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